

witness, the chair of Tel Aviv University's Jewish history department, to contest some of our commission's findings and the plaintiffs' more sensational allegations.

Even if the Hungarian Gold Train case is questionable on legal grounds, and even though some of the facts remain contested, the moral claim by the survivors that their assets were not returned is solid. What, then, should be done now?

For starters, the mindset of the Bush administration's Justice Department must change. We must hold ourselves to the same rigorous moral and historical accountability to which we have held foreign governments and their corporations. This was the basic argument made by a bipartisan group of 17 senators, including Hillary Rodham Clinton of New York and Trent Lott of Mississippi, in a recent letter to Attorney General John Ashcroft.

As reported in these pages two weeks ago, U.S. Federal Judge Patricia Seitz granted part of the Justice Department's motion to dismiss the Hungarian Gold Train case, but denied other parts and has ordered the United States to submit to mediation. The Justice Department should now take the opportunity to allow the mediator to review all the records and documents and to weigh the contested facts, including the amount of Hungarian Jewish assets that was actually on the Gold Train.

Of course, it will be almost impossible for survivors to identify individual items that were confiscated from them and to determine which items made their way onto the Gold Train. That is why the Bush administration should apply the same "rough justice" concepts we used in negotiating with the Germans, Austrians, Swiss and French—this time, for the benefit of Hungarian Jewish survivors in the United States, Israel and Hungary.

After all, it was no easier for slave and forced laborers of German and Austrian companies to identify their employers. Yet German and Austrian corporations and their respective governments met their responsibility and paid billions of dollars to survivors, Jews and non-Jews alike. The French government likewise faced its moral responsibility to those victimized by Vichy France.

Justice would be served if the mediator appointed by Seitz was permitted to make a recommendation to the parties, Congress held a hearing on the mediator's findings and on competing allegations, and President Bush asked Congress for a reasonable lump sum payment to be allocated on a per capita basis to living Hungarian Holocaust survivors who file an affidavit identifying their moveable property that was taken in April 1944 by the pro-Nazi regime.

Obviously, the American government is only responsible for what it seized on the Gold Train and failed to return. And the amount should reflect that some of the assets were sold for the benefit of Holocaust survivors in the United States, a small number of whom were Hungarian Jews. The amount, however, is less important than establishing the principle that the United States will hold itself to the same standard to which we have held others.

And importantly, a simple, straightforward apology should accompany the payments for what was likely a singular deviation from the otherwise sterling conduct of the American military after World War II. The United States will then be in a stronger position to continue to urge other countries to meet their responsibilities—and we will have proved that when the shoe is on our foot, we can wear it.

## TRIBUTE TO SENIORS DAY

### HON. MICHAEL H. MICHAUD

OF MAINE

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, July 22, 2004*

Mr. MICHAUD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the first annual Tribute to Seniors Day to be hosted by the Waldo County YMCA in the City of Belfast, Maine.

The focus of this important day is to honor the seniors of Waldo County and their dedication to their community and their families. This event will give important recognition to our seniors, and will include a health fair and other events and activities that will provide useful social services information.

Tribute to Seniors Day will be a fitting salute to a group that over the years has persevered and seen our country through hard and trying times, including those of the Greatest Generation who lived through the Great Depression and a World War. They were forged in the toughest trials of this century, and they remain community leaders to this day.

While the struggles this generation has faced over the years have changed, today the important fight is for affordable health care and prescription drugs, and our seniors are leading the charge. There is no greater gift of gratitude that we can give to our seniors than to join them in this fight and improve Medicare in order to make prescription drugs affordable for all.

I am certain that this event will be a resounding success for years to come and will provide other areas with a model through which to recognize the lifelong dedication and service provided by local seniors. I encourage everyone in Waldo County to attend this important event and lend their support for their friends and family as we celebrate Tribute to Seniors Day.

To our seniors who have lived through and experienced so much, and who still remain pillars of our community, I salute you.

## MEMORIALIZING ROBERT MASAHIRO YOSHIKAWA

### HON. MICHAEL M. HONDA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

*Thursday, July 22, 2004*

Mr. HONDA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor the life and contributions of Mr. Robert Masahiro Yoshikawa who recently passed away. He was a pillar of the community and a personal friend of mine. Mr. Yoshikawa made an immeasurable impact on all those around him through his career, his volunteer work, and his devotion to family. His tireless efforts improved the lives of countless people in his community.

I met Robert Yoshikawa many years ago when we were both students at San Jose State University. From that moment on, he continually amazed me with his unwavering selflessness and his extraordinary dedication to the community. Throughout his life, he consistently put others before himself through volunteering and his active involvement with his

church, his family activities, and his neighborhood.

For those who are unfamiliar with Mr. Yoshikawa's life, I would like to take a moment to highlight some of his extraordinary contributions. In addition to serving as President of the San Jose Buddhist Church Betsuin, Bob served on the board of directors of both the SJBK and Fuji Towers and played an integral part on many committees. Mr. Yoshikawa served as past chairman of the San Jose Buddhist Church Betsuin Ministerial Affairs and Obon Committees, as well as being a charter member and current president of the Young Japanese Adults. In 2002, Robert was presented with the Volunteer Recognition Award by the Junior League of San Jose.

In addition to his extensive volunteer work, Mr. Yoshikawa was a wonderful husband to his wife Phyllis and father to his sons, Mark and Scott. He served as an ideal role model for his sons, teaching them right from wrong, imparting to them a spirit of service, and making time to involve himself in their lives and activities. He could often be seen videotaping his sons' football games or driving them to various Boy Scouts, sporting or church activities in his Chevy Suburban. He would constantly guide his sons with sage advice from his experience and the experiences of his own father. He was a man of strong conviction, who stood behind his decisions without wavering.

Robert Yoshikawa, a second generation American, was born in Newcastle, California in 1940. Upon graduating from high school, he attended Sierra Junior College before matriculating on to San Jose State where he received a degree in mechanical engineering and met his future wife, Phyllis Osaki. The couple first lived in an apartment in Sunnyvale, but spent the past 37 years in the house in San Jose that they watched being built. It was there they raised their two boys. Robert worked at Lockheed Martin until his retirement in 2003. At Lockheed, Robert's robust engineering skills and attention to detail were instrumental in the success of several important projects. He was praised for being accurate and efficient, and his remarkable patience and experience made him a valuable mentor to the younger engineers at Lockheed.

Upon retiring from his job at Lockheed Martin after 40 years, Mr. Yoshikawa embarked on yet another chapter in his full life. Though he and Phyllis had already traveled the globe, he had even more trips planned and was enjoying his return to improving his golf game with other retired friends. Always wanting to be useful, he also agreed to volunteer at the Japanese American Museum of San Jose as just one more in his myriad of community services. It was on March 24, while volunteering at the museum, that Mr. Yoshikawa died of a heart attack. Since he was in apparent excellent health, his passing came as quite a shock to all who knew him.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to mourn the loss of a friend and a role model. I knew Robert for 40 years and he was as inspirational to me the last time I saw him, as he was when we first met. I know that the people of the Bay Area appreciate everything that this wonderful man has done for them and I feel privileged for having known him.